

Name _____ 4th grade classroom _____ 5th grade classroom _____

4th Grade Summer Reading - *The Birchbark House* by Louise Erdrich

Your summer reading assignment is to read *The Birchbark House*, by Louise Erdrich. It is an *historical fiction* novel. That means it takes place in a specific period of our history, but is not a true story. Sometimes, however, an author will include some actual facts.

The novel is about a young Native American girl whose family is part of the Ojibwa tribe living in the area that is now Wisconsin and Minnesota. The story takes place in the late 1800's at a time when the Ojibwa culture is coming into contact with the white people who have settled in America. The story takes you through an entire year of their life, season by season.

We want you to be “active readers.” That means that while you are reading, you are *thinking* about what you are reading. Each time you meet a new character, underline his or her name. Each time something “big” happens (in your opinion), highlight it or write a note in the margin. If you don't understand a word or something that happens, put a question mark in the margin. This will not only help you keep track of the story, but when you do your worksheets and prepare for the test, it will be easy for you to find important characters and plot changes. Don't be afraid to mark your books. We will be doing this all next year. We do recommend that you buy the paperback, rather than the hardback, however!

After you finish the book, or even while you are reading it, do the attached worksheets. These will be graded when you return in the fall. There will also be a test on the book soon after school starts. Those of you that will be taking Mrs. Novotney's reading class this summer will be doing the worksheet in her class, and you will be exempt from the test in the fall (or can take it for extra credit!).

These pages will be on my Quia page in case you lose them. You may also send me an e-mail if you have any questions. jingraffia@stmel.org

Happy Reading!

Mrs. Ingraflia

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The Birchbark House
by Louise Erdrich

PART 1: Characters: Fill in information and descriptive words on these characters as you get to know them. There is no required number of words, but try to write as many as you can think of.

Omakayas

Words that describe her: _____

Do you like her? Why or why not?: _____

Nokomis (Grandma)

Words that describe her: _____

Dayvey (father)

Words that describe him: _____

Yellow Kettle (mother)

Words that describe her: _____

Pretty Angeline (older sister)

Words that describe her: _____

Little Pinch (brother)

Words that describe him: _____

Neewo (baby brother)

Words that describe him: _____

Old Tallow:

Words that describe her: _____

Andeg:

Words that describe him: _____

Part 2: Seasons: Write as many words as you can to describe where they are in each season (including what type of house) and what they are doing in that season. If something important happens in that season write that down also.

Summer: _____

Fall: _____

Winter: _____

Spring: _____
